

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 RIYADH 00050 141230Z

41

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAB-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 /087 W

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R 141115Z FEB 75

FM USDEL RIYADH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 26

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOOT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

S E C R E T RIYADH 50

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SA, SP, MR, AG, PBOR, PFOR

SUBJECT: SAUDI REPORT OF MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH SPAIN AND ALGERIA

1. MOHAMMAD MAS'UD, SAUDI ACTING MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOLD THE AMBASSADOR FEB 12 THAT SAUDIS WERE VERY DISTURBED BY REPORTS OF SPAINSH REINFORCEMENT OF THEIR GARRISON IN CEUTA AND MELILLA. HE HAD JUST CALLED IN THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR AND TOLD HIM THE ARABS CONSIDERED THIS A "HOSTILE" ACT. MOROCCAN FOREIGN MINISTER LARIKI HAD JUST BEEN IN SAUDI ARABIA AND HAD ASKED FOR SAUDI SUPPORT AND SAUDI ARABIA WOULD DO ALL IT COULD.

2. MAS'UD SAID THE REAL PROBLEM WAS THE SPANISH SAHARA WHICH THE SAUDIS THOUGHT SHOULD BE TURNED OVER TO MOROCCO WITHOUT FURTHER ADO. TO CONDUCT A PLEBISCITE IN AN AREA WITH ONLY 40,000 INHABITANTS WAS ABSURD. IF IT WERE TO OPT FOR INDEPENDENCE IT WOULD SOON FALL UNDER THE DOMINATION OF ALGIERS.

3. MAS'UD SAID THAT BOTH MOROCCO AND TUNISIA FELT THREATENED BY THE "RADICAL, EXPANSIONIST ALGERIA." ALTHOUGH IN MILITARY

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PAGE 02 RIYADH 00050 141230Z

ENCOUNTERS SOME YEARS AGO MOROCCAN TROOPS CAME OFF RATHER WELL AGAINST THE ALGERIANS, THEY WERE NOT SURE THIS WOULD BE THE

CASE TODAY, GIVEN THE HIGH LEVEL OF TRAINING AND ADVANCED
MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN ALGERIA.

4. MAS'UD SAID THAT MOROCCO WOULD SHORTLY BE ASKING THE UNITED
STATES FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND THE SAUDIS WERE PREPARED TO
PAY FOR IT "UP TO A VERY HIGH LEVEL." HE SAID THEY WOULD HAVE
TO WAIT UNTIL STUDIES WERE COMPLETED BUT THE SAUDIS WERE DISPOSED
TO BE "VERY HELPFUL" TO THEIR BROTHER MONARCHY.

5. COMMENT: THE SAUDIS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN MAKING QUITE A SHOW
OF SOLIDARITY WITH ALGERIA BUT IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THEY
SEEM TO BE CONCERNED THAT MOROCCO NOT BE WEAKENED VIS-A-VIS
ALGERIA AS A RESULT OF DIFFICULTIES WITH SPAIN. SAUDI FINANCING
OF ARMS PURCHASES BY MOROCCO HAS BEEN DISCUSSED DESULTORILY
FOR SOME TIME, BUT SUBJECT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN NEW
IMPETUS BY RECENT SPANISH ACTIONS.
AKINS

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NNN

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